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RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 3466  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 1829  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4360  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0885  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 002769

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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/ANP, INR/EAP

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SUBJECT: PAPUA ON LOW BOIL, BUT LITTLE SIGN OF A BLOW UP

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: Poloff visited Jayapura, the capital of Papua, September 17-19. The province remains one of Indonesia's least developed regions and officials are frustrated at the slow pace of fund disbursement under the GOI's Special Autonomy plans. Worries about the role of the military persist. Ethnic Papuans increasingly resent the dominant role played by migrants. Most Papuans are focused on day-to-day challenges and have little time for politics, however. Poloff, for public outreach, addressed students at Papua's major university on U.S. foreign policy. Over all, Papua seemed a bit tense--with Papuans very frustrated with the Indonesian government--but there seemed little sign of any imminent blow up. END SUMMARY.

IN THE WILD, WILD EAST

2. (C) "That's not Papua," Protestant pastor Rev. Andreas Ayomi told poloff while pointing to Jayapura, Papua's main urban center (such as it is), through a restaurant window -- "Papua is far away." He went on to explain that "Indonesians" dominated the town's economy while the mainly rural Papuan populace lived a relatively impoverished existence. Rev. Ayomi's comments highlighted the key themes that recurred throughout poloff's September 17-19 visit to Jayapura: significant development challenges; ethnic rivalry; and a struggle to define the real Papua. (Note: Septel will report on poloff's visit to Timika, U.S. company Freeport McMoran's vast mining operation to the southwest.)

A GOVERNOR WITH A PLAN?

3. (C) Papuan officials spoke of their plans for development. Vice Governor Alex Hesegeg told poloff that the provincial government hoped to make faster progress on Governor Suebu's ambitious development plans, which have placed bureaucratic reform, infrastructure construction, health and education at the very top of the development agenda under Special Autonomy. Virtually every Papuan interlocutor poloff spoke with expressed the same frustration with the slow pace of implementing Special Autonomy. (Note: The governor was unavailable to meet as he was traveling during poloff's visit. Several contacts complained that Suebu is increasingly away from Jayapura, with negative impact on the effectiveness of provincial administration.)

4. (C) Hesegeg also described the one development strategy that was moving forward -- Governor Suebu's village-based development plan. To implement this initiative, Suebu--an ethnic Papuan politician who served as an appointed governor of Papua from 1988-1993 and became Papua's first directly elected governor in 2005--has disbursed 100 million rupiah (approximately USD 1,100) for small-scale community development projects in hundreds of villages. This effort has created widespread support for Special Autonomy and for Governor Suebu personally in many of Papua's remote villages. Representatives of the Papua NGO Forum questioned the value of Suebu's cash distribution, however. According to them, many villages spent most of the money on events to welcome the governor and his entourage, including elaborate banquets,

cultural shows and a lot of beer for local men.

15. (C) Relations between Papua and West Papua are very good, with Suebu and West Papua Governor Bram Atururi collaborating effectively on development plans. Other contacts agreed that relations between the provinces were positive, but only because of the good personal relationship between the two governors. Many legal and institutional issues remain unresolved between the two areas. (Note: The status of West Papua, created after the issuance of the 2001 Special Autonomy law, remains legally ambiguous.)

#### PUTTING THE ACCENT ON THE MILITARY

16. (C) The military remains a very important presence. Berty Fernandez, a Department of Foreign Affairs official seconded to the provincial government to handle border issues with

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Papua New Guinea, focused his remarks on the military's influence in Papua. Fernandez claims that the Indonesian Military (TNI) has far more troops in Papua than it is willing to admit to, chiefly to protect and facilitate TNI's interests in illegal logging operations. Fernandez, who worked with Suebu when the latter was Indonesia's Ambassador to Mexico, claims to be personally close to Governor Suebu. The governor, according to Fernandez, had to move cautiously so as not to upset the TNI, which he said operates as a virtually autonomous governmental entity within the province.

17. (C) When pressed for details on the alleged troop build-up and TNI's illegal logging activities, Fernandez had none and said he was still investigating the matter. Mission has no other information to corroborate Fernandez's claims, which are frequently made by Papuan NGOs and human rights activists. Coming from a member of the governor's own staff, however, the allegations take on an even more serious cast. Papuan People's Council (MRP) Vice Chair Hanna Hikoyoge also told poloff that the MRP was concerned that the TNI had too powerful a role in Papua.

#### JUST WHOSE PAPUA IS IT ANYWAY?

18. (C) Church leaders and Papuan NGOs frequently pointed to the key role played in the provincial economy by migrants from other parts of Indonesia. A visit to Jayapura confirms this impression. Non-Papuans overwhelmingly own and staff the city's small businesses while ethnic Papuans are largely confined to Jayapura's few traditional markets. WhQJFse, ethnic Papuans are increasingly resentful of the dominant economic role played by outsiders or, as some Papuans would have it, "Indonesians." (Note: Although there is little reliable information on Papuan demographics, most observers estimate that nearly half of the province's residents now originate from outside Papua.)

#### GETTING PAST THE PAST

19. (C) Very few Papuan contacts raised the matter of revisiting the 1969 Act of Free Choice, a favorite hobbyhorse of Papua activists outside of Indonesia. Instead, Jayapura contacts seem much more focused on fixing Papua's contemporary problems than they are in righting an alleged historical injustice. (Note: The Act of Free Choice was a UN-sanctioned vote where approximately 1000 Papuan representatives elected to integrate Dutch New Guinea into Indonesia. Papuan activists regard the vote as a sham engineered by the Indonesian government to sabotage Papuans' aspirations for independence.)

110. (C) Director of the Catholic Justice and Peace Secretariat Budi Hernawan complained to poloff that many

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outside activists do not distinguish between political advocacy, such as support for Papuan independence, and taking a sincere stand on human rights or doing anything concrete. Outside activists, he said, know little about the current situation in the province and provoke a reaction from the military and security services by using rhetoric and symbols associated with Papuan separatists. Hernawan, who has excellent access in very remote areas of Papua, contends that most Papuans are more concerned with the material struggles of their daily lives than they are with abstract notions of political independence.

#### ON CAMPUS

111. (SBU) Poloff addressed appr@QQ>'Qj asked why the USG did nothing while Freeport made billions of dollars and Papuans remained poor. Poloff responded that Freeport had negotiated its Contract of Work with the

Indonesian government. He advised the students that since Indonesia was now a democracy, it was up to the Indonesian

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people to raise this matter with their own leaders through the democratic process, a point that prompted applause and shouts of approval from the audience. Poloff also vigorously disabused the audience of the notion that the U.S. was only interested in Indonesia as a counterterrorism partner. He explained that as East Asia's largest democracy and an influential country with enormous economic potential, Indonesia was important to the U.S. for a broad range of reasons.

BLOW UP?

12. (C) Over all, Papua seemed a bit tense--Papuan are clearly very frustrated with the Indonesian government over the slow pace of Special Autonomy implementation and over the migrants. There seemed little sign of any sort of near-term blow up over it all, however. Papuans seem largely resigned to trying to make things work. Poloff underlined to GOI interlocutors the need for more effective decentralization and more effective delivery of government services.

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